Pres. Kennedy

May 5 1961 Press Conference

Q. Mr. President, you have emphasized on several occasions in public the necessity to find new non-military ways to assert and support our foreign policy. Can you suggest to us this afternoon any ways in the immediate future that we might do that in meeting the Communist threat in S. E. Asia, specifically?

Ans.

.... We can assist these countries by our guarantees or at least we can protect these countries by our guarantee against outright military invasion. We can assist them through economic assistance to improve the life of their people. We can assist them through defense support in strengthening their armed forces against internal guerilla activity. But in the final analysis they have to — and we cannot do it for them — they have to organize the political and social life of the country in such a way that they maintain the support of their people.

There is a limit beyond which our efforts can not go.

--- In the final analysis, then, the responsibility rests with the people involved to maintain the support of the people, to identify their government with the people.